

I am a long-time happy customer of an independent ISP, Sonic.net. They are under threat not because they are failing at running a useful and profitable business, but because BellSouth has petitioned the FCC to allow it, and presumably other companies controlling the main data lines criss-crossing America, to end support for alternative ISP's, or to charge fees that would make competition impossible. I am commenting to oppose the BellSouth petition.

I believe that small business is the life blood of American business growth and employment, and it is in jeopardy with the kind of petitions such as this current petition by BellSouth.

I value obtaining Internet service from Sonic.net, and independent ISP, because of the quality of services and the mix of features it offers. In addition, I believe that a level playing field is essential in the business world, and access to the finite network of trunk lines, at reasonable rates, is critical for a flourishing economy in this sector. It also assures the diversity of perspectives and opinions that makes for an informed citizenry, with is conceivably at risk if a small handful of data carriers squash competition for broadband internet service.

I urge the commission to turn down the BellSouth petition.

-David Schoenbach